

LUMBER RIVER, NC

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY PROJECT

2001-2002 Grant Amount: **\$5 Million**

Lumber River Council of Governments
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Mission and Vision

The mission of the Lumber River Youth Opportunity Project is to develop, implement and coordinate comprehensive strategies to provide a systematic approach for improving education, training & workforce development opportunities of youth, so that youth acquire marketable skills and experiences that will lead to success in their chosen careers as well as encourage and develop a heightened sense of community responsibility, service and citizenship.

We plan to significantly decrease the dropout rate, and increase post-secondary opportunities for youth, including increasing the numbers who are attending colleges/universities and/or community colleges.

Program Overview

Our goal is to provide coordinated services to both in-school and especially out-of-school youth by strategically linking five Youth Opportunity Centers to One-Stop Career Centers. We will assist 1000 Native American, African American, and White young people between the ages of 14 - 21, in this high poverty rural area complete high school and get additional education and occupational skills training. We will provide academic tutoring and life skills activities and prepare youth for careers and post-secondary education. We will place youth in work experiences (internship, work experience, job shadowing, summer youth), on-the-job training, Service Corps, and in meaningful long-term employment.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- Operation of 5 centers (Red Springs, Rowland/Marietta, Fairmont, South/West Lumberton, and Maxton) and 1 satellite site (Marietta) throughout Robeson County in SE North Carolina.
- Resource areas in each center contain computers (with Internet access), and other resources on career exploration, life skills, communication skills, study skills, SAT preparation, conflict resolution, interviewing techniques, teen discussion topics (drugs and alcohol, sex, depression and suicide, and coping with pressures).
- Cultural and recreational activities are available to youth.
- Adult High School/Basic Education/GED classes are available onsite at the YO! Centers.
- Creation of local music studio to allow youth to cultivate their musical talent and learn all aspects of the industry.
- Mentoring Program created and available to all youth.
- On-line Web Academy (Internet based component) available at each center to allow in-school youth to make up lost credits.

KEY PARTNERS/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **Lumber River Workforce Development Board**
- **Lumber River Youth Council**
- **University of North Carolina at Pembroke:** Academic Year College Bound Project, Summer Sports and Life Enrichment, Mixed Media, Cultural Program, Golf Academy
- **Public Schools of Robeson County:** Web Academy (PSRC On-Line), Motorsports Academy, Broadcast Television Academy, Construction Academy, Mentoring Project
- **Robeson Community College:** Vocational/technical training, Adult High School, Basic Education, GED
- **Robeson County Cooperative Extension Service:** Expansion of 4-H community clubs
- **District 16B Department of Juvenile Justice:** Teen Court
- **Employment Security Commission/JobLink Career Center:** WIA One Stop
- **Palmer Prevention, Inc.:** YO! Music Studio
- Youth Councils: Our Youth Council is a subcommittee of the Workforce Development Board, which meets quarterly. Three youth serve on this board. Each center has a Community Youth Advisory Council that meets monthly. Twelve youth along with seven adults serve on each council.
- Local Advisory Board: Our Workforce Development Board meets bi-monthly.
- Workplace/Business/Community Partners: Partners, members in the communities and local employers provide continuous support by facilitating workshops, providing employment opportunities and attending activities.